



FRIENDS  
OF THE  
CORCORAN  
25TH  
ANNIVERSARY  
EXHIBITION



Front cover:  
Roger Brown (1941- )  
*Waterfall* 1974  
oil on canvas, 72 x 48 in.

THE CORCORAN  
GALLERY OF ART,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

MARCH 14 TO  
MARCH 30, 1986

SELECTIONS  
FROM  
ACQUISITIONS  
BY THE  
FRIENDS  
OF THE  
CORCORAN  
1961-1985

This catalog is dedicated to the memory of *James R. McAlee*,  
member of the Board of Directors of the Friends of The Corcoran,  
and Chair of Acquisitions 1986.



In the 1961 Annual Report of the Corcoran Gallery, George E. Hamilton, Jr., the president of the Board of Trustees noted a "significant development." It was the formation of the Friends of the Corcoran. Judge Edward A. Beard, the first president of the Friends of the Corcoran expressed his hopes . . . "to develop the interest of the Washington community in contemporary American art, to unify and focalize this interest to the benefit of the Corcoran, which we believe by tradition, by geographic location, and by vitality of policy to be the logical recipient of it . . ." A succession of officers and twenty-five years of active support of the Gallery has followed.

Each year, the pursuit of the Friends of the Corcoran Annual Acquisition has generated great interest and excitement. Hard working committees spend considerable time working with the Gallery's curatorial staff to provide not only a purchase of importance to the collection, but also a process that will broaden the interest in contemporary American art shared by the Friends and others in the Washington community. Each year's process has owed a considerable amount to the chairman of the Friends Acquisition Committee. This year has been no exception. Jim McAlee, who guided this process once before as chairman of the committee in 1981, helped meet the special challenge of the 25th Anniversary year. His untimely death just before the New Year is a loss to us all. We are grateful for his guidance, and believe that we will have every right to be proud of this year's results.

The exhibition that celebrates this anniversary is of necessity an edited version of the fruits of the last twenty-five years. And while each of the purchases makes a particular contribution to the Corcoran's collection, it is the overall commitment that is most important. No collection was ever built, or ever matured to a new level of importance with one purchase. It is the continuity of effort that counts. It is the collective impact of the Friends Acquisition Program—achievements to date and prospects for the future—that is the real legacy of the Friends. Their steady commitment has indeed served to "focalize" our communal energy and attention on contemporary American art—to our benefit.

Michael Botwinick  
Director

## INTRODUCTION

Twenty-five years ago a small group of dedicated people with a dual interest in modern American art and the future of the Corcoran Gallery of Art had an idea of forming an independent organization for the support of the Gallery. They approached the Board of Trustees and asked that in exchange for an annual donation of one or more works of contemporary American art they be given the privilege of previews of major shows at the Corcoran and other events to be held at the Gallery. The Trustees, who had little money available for purchases, agreed and the Friends of the Corcoran was born. Major credit for this idea goes to the Friends' first two presidents, Judge Edward A. Beard and Sidney S. Zlotnick.

The Friends were to have their own Charter and By-laws. The purpose was to raise money to buy works of art for the Corcoran and to encourage an interest in the private collecting of American art. They were to be governed by a Board of Directors consisting of four officers, with two year terms, and eleven Directors, with staggered three year terms, to be elected by the membership at an annual business meeting to be held each September.

Benefits of membership were the annual participation in the selection of a work of art for the permanent collection of the Gallery, previews (prior to those of the Gallery's general membership) of all major shows at the Gallery and attendance at other events of artistic and social interest. Dues were set at \$100.00.

From the very beginning the venture was a success. In ten months the original group of six grew to one hundred and twenty, and in the first year they presented to the Gallery three works by significant artists of the day.

Because the selection of a gift for the Gallery was considered to be so important a very special procedure was set up for this purpose. An Acquisitions Committee consisting of the President of the Friends, a representative from the Gallery, and six members, three of whom were elected by the membership and three named by the Board of Directors, met and chose three or four works of art to be presented to the membership for its vote at an annual acquisitions' night. The winner went into the permanent collection of the Gallery. In the early years of the Friends these works were usually selected from the Corcoran's Biennial or Area shows. In addition, when an opportunity presented itself, the Acquisitions Committee could recommend to the Board the purchase of additional works and, if funds were available, the Board might approve.

In order to maintain and promote membership the Board worked hard at presenting other events at the Gallery which would appeal to the members. First there were lectures and discussions of the shows with Gallery staff and local art critics. Later outside events were added, such as trips to other museums, visits to private collections and embassy receptions. Initially, because the group was small, all these events were free to the members, with funds provided by the small percentage of the dues allowed to be spent, under I.R.S. regulations, for promotional purposes.

In the fifth anniversary year of the organization, in keeping with the other purpose of the Friends, an exhibition of works from members' collections was presented at the Gallery with a fine sampling of the wealth of art to be found in Washington homes. This was repeated every five years with other exhibitions of American paintings, drawings and sculpture. All were well received. But more importantly, this encouragement of

## HISTORY OF THE FRIENDS

private collecting led to several major donations to the Corcoran from individual members.

However, even with all the successful efforts, there were problems. For several years the membership of the Friends failed to grow beyond one hundred and twenty-five. In addition many members, in spite of encouragement from the Board, failed to maintain membership in the Corcoran as well and this displeased the Gallery which began to view the Friends as a competitor for much needed funds.

In an effort to improve matters and end the growing enmity, the Friends approached David Lloyd Kreeger, President of the Board of Trustees, which had been newly reconstituted and enlarged, with an idea to bring about a better relationship. We suggested that the Friends and the hundred dollar category of Corcoran membership (which had also languished for years at the one hundred and twenty-five member level because of the lack of significant benefits) merge and the entire group become a new category of membership to be known as the Friends of the Corcoran. The group would function under the direction of the Friends' Board, but henceforth the money from renewals and new memberships would be divided between the Corcoran and the Friends, who would continue with the same purpose and privileges. After much discussion on both sides this merger became a reality by vote of the Board of Trustees on September 30, 1974.

The wisdom of this decision was almost immediately apparent. In one year this combined membership of 250 grew to 450 as lower paying members of the Corcoran learned, through the monthly calendar, of the benefits to be derived from joining at the higher level. The Friends have continued to grow so that today almost one out of every three members of the Corcoran is a Friend.

Only one problem resulted from this change. Because of the way the dues were divided and the increased cost of providing events for the larger group, it was no longer feasible to have programs which were free and a small charge became necessary for most events. On the other hand, the increased membership permitted the addition of one major program: Friends' trips to such far away places as China, Europe, Russia and South America under the direction of the indefatigable Estelle Bechhoefer.

The Friends can justifiably be proud of their accomplishments over the past twenty-five years which, in addition to the many fine works given to the Gallery, include providing, at the urgent request of the Corcoran, the funds for an Associate Curator of Contemporary Art for the Washington Region in 1978 and the furnishing of a Members' Lounge. For the next twenty-five years: Excelsior!

Dr. Thomas A. Mathews  
President 1972-75

## HISTORY OF THE FRIENDS

The Friends of the Corcoran commitment to acquisitions has produced a remarkable legacy for the Museum. Naturally enough, the objects which have been added to the Collections – primarily modern works, and by American artists – reflect the shifts and vagaries of contemporary art itself in recent times. Given the inevitable vicissitudes of fashion and taste in any period, it is difficult even for the most highly trained professional curator to select works which both reveal something particular to their time, and endure on their own terms as time passes and their contexts change. It is infinitely more remarkable, then, to achieve a coherent and lastingly appealing group of works of art when its selection is undertaken by various individuals, working together in various combinations and with differing budgets, systems of approach, and curatorial advisors.

Out of the full array of always interesting and often superior art works acquired for the Corcoran by the Friends, we have selected a few to show and reproduce here, which not only stand as beautiful objects, but reflect a range of artistic concerns, during the last twenty-five years, which parallels the Friends' own existence.

Three objects can be said to stand almost as icons in the present contexts of major directions in contemporary American art: the Louise Nevelson *Ancient Secrets*, 1964, Joseph Cornell's *Caravaggio Prince, Medici Slot Machine*, c. 1950, and Hans Hofmann's *Golden Blaze*, 1958. Each of these pieces represents the three artists at their best; each of these artists takes a place in American post-war art which makes him or her virtually an institution.

Two essentially divergent threads in the evolution of American art since the 1950s can be located in the tendencies either toward the elaboration of Hofmann's school of abstract painting, or toward figuration and narrative, a complex movement stemming in part from a few unique, Surrealist-oriented figures like Joseph Cornell. Each of these basic movements is well represented in the body of works gathered here.

The two generations of abstract painters coming out of Hofmann's early abstract expressionist episode include among their foremost ranks such painters as Sam Francis, Jules Olitski, Lawrence Poons, Ron Davis and Bruce Boice. The works by these artists selected for the Corcoran's collection range from classically definitive examples, like Olitski's *Pink Alert*, and Ron Davis' *T-Beam*, to the somewhat more tentative, if vital, works by Francis and Poons. As a group of recent American color paintings, this selection addresses many of the important concerns of this vast and lively phenomenon.

## NOTES ON THE EXHIBITION

The concurrent development of a multi-faceted imagistic movement in American art is similarly well represented in just four paintings, spanning more than a decade and touching upon "classical new realism," Pop Art, post-minimalist "new image painting," and Chicago School narrative painting. These are exemplified respectively by Philip Pearlstein, Andy Warhol, Neil Jenney and Roger Brown, and serve to touch every important base of this enormous and complex artistic episode. Each example here characterizes a key moment in the overall array of these artists' production.

The twelve works selected for display and reproduction in this Twenty-fifth anniversary celebration of the Friends of the Corcoran are merely a sampling of the whole body of acquisitions. Other pieces, such as those by Richard Pousette-Dart, George L. K. Morris, Jack Youngerman and Nancy Graves, stand as extraordinarily important parts of our permanent collection. The presence, too, of major works by the Washington, D.C. artists Jacob Kainen, Howard Mehring, Joseph Shannon, Brockie Stevenson, Jennie Lea Knight, Ed McGowin, Michael Clark and Willem DeLooper, constitutes in itself an important addition to the museum's holdings.

The works listed here comprise only those acquired for the Corcoran by the Friends as a group. Many other donations, some extraordinarily valuable, have come to us through the generosity of individual members of the Friends. It is testimony both to the vital dependence the Corcoran has upon its volunteer support groups, and to the powerful efficacy of the local community's efforts in our behalf, that we can gather together on this occasion such an impressive cross-section of the museum's collection of modern American art.

Jane Livingston  
Associate Director and Chief Curator

NOTES  
ON THE  
EXHIBITION



Jules Olitski (1922- )  
*Pink Alert* 1966  
acrylic on canvas  
113 x 80 in.



**Hans Hofmann** (1880-1966)

*Golden Blaze* 1958

oil on canvas

72 x 60 in.

Purchased with the generous assistance  
of Maxwell Oxman.



**Louise Nevelson** (1900- )  
*Ancient Secrets* 1964  
wood and black paint  
74 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 68 x 27 in.



**Philip Pearlstein** (1924- )  
*Reclining Nude on Green Couch* 1971  
oil on canvas  
60 x 48 in.



Ronald Davis (1937- )  
*T Beam* 1974  
acrylic and dry pigment on canvas  
111½ x 144 in.



Andy Warhol (1931- )  
*Mao* 1973  
silkscreen and acrylic on canvas  
50 1/4 x 42 in.



**Joseph Cornell** (1907-1972)  
*Caravaggio Prince, Medici Slot Machine Variant* c. 1950  
construction and collage  
15½ x 9¾ x 4½ in.



**Neil Jenney** (1945- )  
*Coat and Coated* 1970  
acrylic on canvas  
50 x 57 3/4 in.



**Sam Francis** (1923- )

*Untitled* 1974

acrylic on canvas

98 1/4 x 86 1/2 in.

Purchased with the aid of funds from  
the National Endowment for the Arts,  
Washington, D.C., a Federal Agency.



**Lawrence Poons** (1937- )

*Seel* 1981

acrylic on canvas

94 x 83 in.

Purchased with the aid of funds from  
the National Endowment for the Arts,  
Washington, D.C., a Federal Agency.



**Bruce Boice** (1941- )  
*The Birth of Tiberius* 1983  
oil on canvas  
82 x 72 in.

1961

**Gyorgy Kepes** (1906- )  
*Nature Fabric*  
oil on canvas, 59 1/4 x 59 1/4 in.  
61.41

**Karl Knaths** (1891-1971)  
*Net Menders* 1961  
oil on canvas, 40 1/4 x 50 1/4 in.  
61.42

**James Weeks** (1922- )  
*Park Landscape* 1960  
oil on canvas, 51 3/4 x 44 in.  
61.45

1963

**Rico Lebrun** (1900-1964)  
*Night Figures #2* 1961  
oil on canvas, 78 3/4 x 108 5/8 in.  
63.1

**Edwin Dickinson** (1891-1978)  
*Still Life with Microscope* 1941  
oil on canvas, 32 x 28 1/4 in.  
63.22

1965

**Stanley D. Edwards** (1941- )  
*Infant on Altar* 1964  
oil on canvas, 72 x 84 in.  
65.3

**Richard Pousette-Dart** (1916- )  
*Ramapo Sky* 1963  
oil on canvas, 50 3/4 x 75 5/8 in.  
65.6

**George L. K. Morris** (1905-1975)  
*Indian Composition* 1942-45  
oil on canvas, 63 1/4 x 49 1/4 in.  
65.21

**Keith Martin** (1911- )  
*Oracle* 1964  
pastel, crayon and charcoal on paper  
39 7/8 x 30 in.  
65.27

1966

**Jacob Kainen** (1909- )  
*Mother and Children* 1965  
oil on canvas, 43 1/2 x 55 in.  
66.2

**George Rickey** (1907- )  
*Peristyle III* 1966  
21 blades of stainless steel on base, 40 1/2 x 102 1/4 x 5 1/4 in.  
66.29

1967

**Kenneth Callahan** (1906- )  
*The Waiters* 1964  
oil on canvas, 43 x 27 in.  
67.1

**Jules Olitski** (1922- )  
*Pink Alert* 1966  
acrylic on canvas, 113 x 80 in.  
67.12

1968

**Sante Grazianni** (1920- )  
*Stuart's Red, White and Blue* 1965  
acrylic on canvas, 44 1/4 x 44 1/2 in.  
68.19

WORKS  
OF ART  
GIVEN  
BY THE  
FRIENDS

1969

**Hans Hofmann** (1880-1966)

*Golden Blaze* 1958

oil on canvas, 72 x 60 in.

68.37

Purchased with the generous assistance  
of Maxwell Oxman.

**Louise Nevelson** (1900- )

*Ancient Secrets* 1964

wood and black paint, 74 $\frac{5}{8}$  x 68 x 27 in.

68.41

1970

**Jack Youngerman** (1926- )

*July White* 1966

acrylic on canvas, 109 x 79 in.

1969.16

**Jack Boul** (1927- )

*Baltimore Alley* 1965

oil on canvas, 24 x 30 in.

1970.15.1

**Howard Mehring** (1931-1978)

*Panu-The-Pandulum* 1961

acrylic on canvas, 57 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 58 $\frac{1}{4}$  in.

1970.15.2

**Joseph Shannon** (1933- )

*Freud's Dog* 1969

polymer on canvas, 42 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 46 $\frac{1}{2}$  in.

1970.15.3

1971

**Thomas Wilfred** (1889-1968)

*Orientale, op 155* 1962

light machine, projected moving image up to 30 feet square,  
67 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 32 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 28 in.

1971.6

**Philip Pearlstein** (1924- )

*Reclining Nude on Green Couch* 1971

oil on canvas, 60 x 48 in.

1971.7.2

**Franklin Owen** (1939- )

*Mandan #19* 1970

acrylic on canvas, 78 x 124 in.

1971.71

1972

**Brockie A. Stevenson** (1919- )

*She's A Mighty Engine III* 1969-70

acrylic on canvas, 45 x 189 in.

1972.25

1973

**Jennie Lea Knight** (1933- )

*Roc* 1969

pine, 18 x 19 x 14 in.

1973.2

1974

**Kay Kurt** (1944- )

*Licorice* 1971-2

oil on canvas, 135 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 73 in.

1974.49

1975

**Ed McGowin** (1938- )

*Children* 1967-68

10 pieces of vacuum-formed plexiglass

1974.51

**Ronald Davis** (1937- )

*T Beam* 1974

acrylic and dry pigment on canvas, 111 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 144 in.

1975.8

WORKS  
OF ART  
GIVEN  
BY THE  
FRIENDS

1976

**Andy Warhol** (1931- )  
*Mao* 1973  
silkscreen and acrylic on canvas, 50 1/4 x 42 in.  
1976.44

1977

**David Headley** (1946- )  
*Jura* 1976  
aqua-tec and magna on canvas, 92 1/4 x 157 in.  
1976.45

1978

**Michael Clark** (1946- )  
*San Francisco Chinatown Windows* 1976  
oil on linen, 30 x 36 in.  
1977.11

1979

**Joseph Cornell** (1907-1972)  
*Caravaggio Prince, Medici Slot Machine Variant* c. 1950  
construction and collage, 15 1/2 x 9 3/4 x 4 1/2 in.  
1978.10

1980

**Willem de Kooning** (1932- )  
*Untitled* 1979  
acrylic on canvas, 72 x 60 1/4 in.  
1979.11

**Neil Jenney** (1945- )  
*Coat and Coated* 1970  
acrylic on canvas, 50 x 57 3/4 in.  
1979.98

**Sam Francis** (1923- )  
*Untitled* 1974  
acrylic on canvas, 98 1/4 x 86 1/2 in.  
1980.95

Purchased with the aid of funds from the  
National Endowment for the Arts,  
Washington, D.C., a Federal Agency.

1981

**Lawrence Poons** (1937- )  
*Seel* 1981  
acrylic on canvas, 94 x 83 in.  
1981.107

Purchased with the aid of funds from the  
National Endowment for the Arts,  
Washington, D.C., a Federal Agency.

1983

**Nancy Graves** (1940- )  
*Consequence* 1982  
oil on canvas, 80 x 63 in.  
1983.8

1984

**Bruce Boice** (1941- )  
*The Birth of Tiberius* 1983  
oil on canvas, 82 x 72 in.  
1984.8

1985

**Roger Brown** (1941- )  
*Waterfall* 1974  
oil on canvas, 72 x 48 in.  
1985.13

WORKS  
OF ART  
GIVEN  
BY THE  
FRIENDS

# FRIENDS OF THE CORCORAN

## **The Friends of the Corcoran**

President: Mrs. Jean McDuffie Nowak  
Vice-President: Mr. Mackenzie Gordon  
Secretary: Mr. Standau E. Weinbrecht  
Treasurer: Mr. Mones E. Hawley

## **Board of Directors**

Mrs. Martin Atlas  
Mrs. Frederick J. O. Blachly  
Mrs. Richard T. Black  
Mrs. Ross D. Davis  
Mrs. John B. Gantt  
Mr. Milo Hoots, Jr.  
Mr. Louis Kaplan  
Mrs. Robert Case Liotta  
Col. David P. Montague (Ret.)  
Mrs. Jean Ogden  
Mrs. Morton Schomer

## **Past Presidents**

Judge Edward Beard: 1961-63  
Mr. Sidney Zlotnick: 1963-65  
Mrs. Tompkins Parker: 1965-67  
Mr. Fleming Bomar: 1967  
Mr. Mark Sandground: 1968-69  
Judge Catherine Kelley: 1969-70  
Mr. Julian Singman: 1970-72  
Dr. Thomas Mathews: 1972-75  
Mrs. Bernhard G. Bechhoefer: 1975-78  
Mr. Marvin J. Gerstn: 1978-81  
Mr. Frederick J. O. Blachly: 1981-84

## **25th Anniversary Committee**

Mrs. Bernhard G. Bechhoefer  
Mrs. Ellen Berlow  
Mr. Frederick Blachly  
Mrs. Leon Brown  
Mr. Marvin Gerstn  
Dr. Thomas Mathews  
Mr. John Toole

With special thanks to Mrs. Leon Brown for making the  
Anniversary evening possible, and Ms. Linda Crocker Simmons for  
her archival assistance on the catalog.

Printing: Colortone Press  
Typography: Trade Type/Phil's Photo

**CORCORAN**

GALLERY AND SCHOOL OF ART  
17th & NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006